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9mm — See Page 18

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SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

JULY 1995
48493

**DEATH OF
A WARRIOR:**
SOF Staffer
Killed By Rebels
In Sierra Leone

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CAMP FOR CIVILIANS

FALL OF
MANERPLAW:
Karens Betrayed
& Beaten In Battle

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On The Ground
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In Memoriam:
Lt. Col. Robert Mackenzie
1948-1995



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For editorial/advertising, call 303-449-3750.
Subscription inquiries, call 1-800-877-5207.
For list rental contact: Alan Drey Co., Erika Courcier, 312-551-7850

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Terrorism's Vicious Circle

by Robert K. Brown

The bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City was a damnable act of wanton murder. Only a very sick mind would suggest that the Waco massacre and the murder of Vickie Weaver somehow call for this form of retribution.

I can understand the widespread and righteous outrage at the Ruby Ridge and Waco murders — a recent CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll said 39% of people queried think the federal government "...poses an immediate threat to the rights and freedoms of ordinary citizens" — the official lies and cover-ups, and total failure to punish the culprits, but the remedy here lies in the courts of law and the halls of Congress, and at the polling booths, not in killing scores of innocent victims.

There are several aspects of this outrage with which I am not at all comfortable:

- First, the assumption by the media that non-governmental militias are somehow involved in this. Of course, the festering anger and fear caused by the government's failure to punish anyone for the outrages at Ruby Ridge and Waco or even apologize are a major factor in the growth of the militias, but it appears that the intent of the vast majority of these groups is to defend the rights of the citizens, not to attack a government that they and all of us hope will shortly come to its senses.

- Second, I am not comfortable with the idea of armed, organized paramilitary bodies not under any

type of control and in no way responsible to the citizens and the democratic elective process pushing their own political agendas. Until the situation gets to the point of prohibiting criticism of the holders of power or interfering with the holding of democratic elections there is no justification for a call to arms. The ballot box, not the cartridge box, is the way to resolve problems as proven in the recent congressional elections.

- Third and predictably, Bill Clinton, Janet Reno and others have called for legislation conferring dangerous and unconstitutional powers on the FBI and other federal law enforcement, in the name of "fighting terrorism." Giving arbitrary power to the Clinton administration as stated in the Omnibus Counterterrorism Bill (S-390 in the Senate and HR-896 in the House), by allowing it to determine who is a terrorist and which groups are terrorist without any guidelines or controls, is frightening. This will fuel the paranoid fears of those who already see in the federal government a sinister conspiracy to impose tyranny on the country.

If, as now appears, the Oklahoma City outrage was the work of three or four demented individuals operating on their own, spying on larger and more rational organizations with politically incorrect agendas, like the militias, will do little or nothing to prevent future outrages. And the price in terms of further erosion of our liberties is too high. ✕

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Photo: U.S. Navy/Milton R. Savage

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Photo: Robert Walchli



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Photo: courtesy Don Dickinson

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COVER

A man of exceptional ability who fought only for causes he deemed good and just, Lt. Col. Robert C. MacKenzie, was a soldier's soldier, a consummate professional whose skills were in demand all over the world. He was killed in action earlier this year while leading a combat operation in Sierra Leone. Article on page 36. Photo: courtesy Sibyl MacKenzie



Death Of A Warrior

by Sibyl MacKenzie



Lt. Col. Robert Callen MacKenzie
(1948-1995)
(in uniform of captain, Rhodesian
SAS, circa 1977). Photo: SOF files

Colonel Robert MacKenzie 1948-1995

maintain his distance behind the leader, which carried six Gurkhas and Lieutenant Andy Myers. A truck full of Sierra Leonean soldiers and a convoy of overburdened civilian vehicles followed the two lead vehicles down the narrow road. Bandit territory officially ended at Mile 47 with its government garrison, where they would stop to make weapons safe and relax a little. Vigilance in Sierra Leone, however, is never out of place.

Ambush!

Suddenly, automatic weapons fire erupted from the right side of the road and bullets cracked through the air. The first vehicle accelerated through the kill zone and stopped. MacKenzie's vehicle



Lt. Col. Robert MacKenzie (standing, wings on hat) with some of the elite Sierra Leone Commando Unit he was training with 60 Gurkhas from Gurkha Security Guards. When killed, MacKenzie had just begun training these troops to stem the onslaught from Revolutionary United Front terrorists in Sierra Leone. Photo: Sibyl MacKenzie

Leaving Camp Charlie
on 17 February, the Gurkhas climbed aboard their trucks, chambered rounds and snapped the safeties off their new AKs. Though their main mission was to train the Sierra Leone Commando Unit, the often ambushed and only road to Freetown had to be secured if they were to hold onto their training

site 91 miles from Freetown and deep in bandit country.

Colonel Robert MacKenzie, commander of the 60 Gurkha trainers, rode in the front of his vehicle, rifle at the ready. Heavy foliage crowded the narrow road, blocking visibility into the bush. MacKenzie scanned the thicket and reminded his driver to

followed. He could see some of the civilian convoy trying to turn around, and he yelled for them to follow. Marshalling his Gurkhas and the indigenous troops, he began flanking the ambushers. Under heavy return fire, and no doubt in shock at the aggressive reaction they triggered, the bandits turned and ran. The thick bush



As terrors are wont to do, RUF bandits ambush road traffic in Sierra Leone, disrupting commerce and normal life: MacKenzie (tan beret) forms up convoy of civilian vehicles to go from Freetown to Mile 91 (top). Professionalism counts — convoy proceeds down ambush alley with armed escort, properly spaced, weapons ready (center). En route to Camp Charlie in the middle of bandit country, convoy passes earlier motorcade that was butchered in place (bottom). Attacked, MacKenzie's response was to seize initiative and execute immediate flanking maneuver against attackers: Spoor indicated three terrors shot. Convoy proceeded unharmed. Photos: Sibyl MacKenzie



completely hid their flight and inhibited tracking, but MacKenzie found three blood spoors on the ground. The convoy had taken no casualties.

Dancing and singing broke out among the civilians and word flashed through the bush to Mile 47. As they drove into town, citizens stood by

the road and clapped and yelled. The unthinkable had happened: The government fought back and routed the bandits. MacKenzie was pleased. Fifteen years in Africa had taught him it is the little folks who suffer in African wars. It was nice to fight for them. The last convoy that tried

to drive that road still lay beside it — 11 burned-out vehicles, a few bodies, scattered personal items. He was confident he and his commando unit could make a difference in Sierra Leone.

MacKenzie had arrived the end of January at the behest of Sierra Leone's leader, Chairman Valentine Strasser, and his right-hand man Major Abu Tarawali, affectionately known as ABT. A group of armed bandits/rebels known as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) was plaguing the country. Tarawali, trained at Fort Benning, contacted GSG, the Gurkha Security

Guards, and arranged for 60 Gurkhas to train a crack unit — a unit so good, so tough that RUF rebels would give up. That's how the Sierra Leone Commando Unit (SLCU) was born, and MacKenzie was its first commander. The first group, consisting of 160 men, was hand-picked. Hopes ran high as the new outfit began to shape up. New AKs were issued and uniforms of Portuguese camouflage, cut French-style with dark green berets, had the men standing tall. MacKenzie and the Gurkhas had mythical status in the minds of the men at the outset because of an incident in early February, two weeks before routing the would-be RUF ambushers.

The earlier incident had Mike Borlace, a co-director of GSG, MacKenzie and Tarawali checking possible sites for what would become the commando unit's training base, Camp Charlie. Near Mile 91 with an escort of SLCU troops-to-be, they

PESTILENTIAL SIERRA LEONE

The most common adjective in books describing Sierra Leone is "pestilential." Doctors recommend an astonishing array of shots for travelers. It is a small country to harbor so many diseases, only 27,925 square miles located on the coast of West Africa, 500 miles north of the equator. The climate is either hot and dry or hot and wet. An estimated 4.7 million people live there, 75% by subsistence agriculture. Less than 21% are literate; life expectancy is 42 years; per capita income is \$230.

The Twilight Zone starts at Lungi Airport, cleverly situated across a broad, bridgeless estuary from Freetown, the capital. Enlightened civic planners are trying to estimate which would cost less — building a bridge or moving the airport.

Despite its people's poverty, Sierra Leone is rich in diamonds, gold, bauxite and rutile, but wealth is limited to a few corrupt politicians and their business partners. Most of the mines have been shut down by the Revolutionary United Front insurgency, cutting two-thirds of Sierra Leone's export earnings. Currently, 90% of the diamonds harvested in the country are stolen.

A former British colony, Sierra Leone achieved independence in 1961, became a republic in 1971 and a one-party state in 1978. By 1991 the government achieved a level of corruption unusual even for Africa. In 1992 Captain Valentine Strasser, 27 years old and unhappy with the direction the country was taking, proceeded to Freetown with some army friends to discuss his concerns with then-President Joe Momoh. Thinking it a military coup, Momoh hastily decamped to Guinea, leaving government in the hands of Capt. Strasser and fellow junior officers. Chairman Strasser, who has eschewed promotion and remains a captain, has been trying to run the country ever since and his efforts are largely supported by the common people.

Continued on page 85

came upon a burning village and the rebels who set it on fire. Borlace and MacKenzie immediately formed up a patrol to pursue the bandits. At first only the intrepid Tarawali would join them, so they left the frightened African troops on the road and proceeded. Finding it was scarier to be alone than it was to join their new colonel, the indigenous troops reluctantly followed. Surprised by such determined action, the bandits broke and ran, and new confidence infused the SLCU troops. They had taken no casualties and driven the bandits off. After the contact, Borlace, MacKenzie and Tarawali continued to an abandoned agricultural station and decided to situate Camp Charlie there, an island of resistance in a sea of bandits.

As a military base, Camp Charlie was the best available option, with good and bad points. Some 20 solid houses stood along three sides of a road network a quarter-mile square. A headquarters complex, motor pool and security gate lined the other side. Palm and mango trees dotted the base and the blazing sun shone over a central grassy field. There were but the sorry remnants of a fence, no cleared fields of fire, no defensive positions



Then-Maj. Robert MacKenzie (facing camera, right) ground-trains Bosnian troops in heliborne operations on a Soviet-built Mi-8 chopper, 1994. Around the world, when a worthy cause needed help they benefited from MacKenzie's quiet competence. Photo: courtesy Sibyl MacKenzie



Who Dares Wins: Squadron Commander Capt. Robert MacKenzie, the most decorated American to serve in Rhodesia, receives the Rhodesian Silver Star in 1979, for "conspicuous gallantry and leadership in action." Photo: Rhodesian Ministry of Defense

and no gate security. These conditions were to have been addressed before MacKenzie's Gurkhas arrived, but nothing had been done. The enormously deep well was remarkably un-deep in water. Nonetheless, spirits remained high with the promise of water dowsers and a bulldozer to clear the camp, make a rifle range and clear wreckage of the last, failed, convoy. MacKenzie returned to Camp Charlie on 18 February, bringing his wife and a long convoy of

happy civilians bound for Mile 91. With years of experience in Africa, MacKenzie was ready to deal with these problems and to commence training the SCLU.

His early successes, however, would rise to haunt him. The army high command, isolated in Freetown and unaware of the reality of Camp Charlie, was ecstatic at the repelled bandit attack and the routed ambush. They convinced themselves RUF would collapse under any organized offense and decided the time was now, while initiative and momentum were on their side. MacKenzie was peppered with demands to take the Gurkhas and win the war — forget about training SLCU, that could be done afterward. He protested that the Gurkhas' contract was for training and they were legally constrained from offensive actions. The reply came that he should then form up the SLCU and attack the RUF bandits' stronghold in the Malal Hills *without* the Gurkhas. He protested that his troops were not trained, but the demands continued, and finally the army chief of staff personally wrote to MacKenzie, ordering the attack for the 22nd or the 23rd of February. Determined to do his duty, MacKenzie agreed to investigate the possibility of attacking the Malal Hills.

Against Better Judgment

"Intelligence" (rumors) crackled over the tenuous radio link between Camp Charlie and Freetown: First it reported 150 bandits had come from the Kangari Hills to the east to reinforce the Malal Hills group, thus it was important to catch them all together. Then it was rumored this group had gone back to the Kangari Hills, so it was deemed critical to attack while the Malal Hills group was weak. "Junior," one of the bandit leaders, was reported killed when the ambush was routed — seen as a great victory. Junior was allegedly from Liberia and was part of the triumvirate of comic-opera names who reportedly ran the camp in the Malal Hills — the others were "Rambo" and "First Blood." Villagers reported seeing bandits carrying Junior's body back to camp. Finally, the argument was made that the torrential rainy season — as much in one month as Seattle has all year — would start in eight weeks, making early resolution of the bandit prob-



Waiting: In October 1985, MacKenzie (left) was in El Salvador sponsored by SOF, training long-range recon companies to fight communist terrorists. His dedication to the cause of freedom, his hatred of communism, never flagged. Photo: courtesy Sibyl MacKenzie

ROBERT C. MacKENZIE

At 17 Robert C. MacKenzie joined the U.S. Army. He had just finished high school and was awarded an appointment to the Air Force Academy. But it was 1966 and a war he didn't want to miss was raging in Vietnam. He chucked the Air Force, went down to the Army recruiting station in San Diego, California, and enlisted as an infantryman. By 1967 he was airborne, had completed the jungle operations course in Panama, and was on his way to Vietnam. On 29 May 1967 he was hit by a bullet storming Mother's Day Hill. After a year in the hospital he was permanently retired from the U.S. Army for medical disability.

All of MacKenzie's life he had wanted to be a soldier. Just because the U.S. Army declared him 70% disabled, he wasn't about to give up. In 1970 he traveled to Rhodesia and, passing the rigorous selection course, joined the Rhodesian Special Air Service (SAS). From 1970-1980 MacKenzie rose through the ranks from private to captain and SAS squadron commander. He received the Bronze Cross of Rhodesia for "gallantry and determination in action," and the Silver Cross of Rhodesia for "conspicuous gallantry and leadership in action."

Politicians ended the war in Rhodesia and in 1980 Zimbabwe was born. MacKenzie resigned from the Zimbabwe army and joined the South African Defense Force as a special forces major. In 1981 he joined the Transkei Defence Force as second-in-command, Transkei Special Forces Regiment. By 1985, after 15 years abroad, he was ready to come back to the United States.

SOF's Robert K. Brown gave MacKenzie a job as a contributing editor for unconventional operations, and MacKenzie continued his unconventional career. In Mozambique he worked in support of RENAMO, the guerrilla freedom fighters, securing the release of seven Western hostages; he trained and fought in Central America; he fought in Croatia and in Bosnia. He visited many bizarre places for SOF, contributing articles on Russia, Thailand, Suriname, Taiwan and Cambodia, to name a few. In February 1995 he went to Sierra Leone to command a training team of 60 Gurkhas, and on 24 February 1995 he was shot and killed in an assault on the Malal Hills.

For his entire career Robert MacKenzie was a professional. He fought only for causes that he deemed good, and always resisted the term "mercenary." He certainly never took the field for money alone. His style of command was to lead, and his most cherished moment was to stand up and say "follow me" and have his men follow him into battle. He was calm and capable under stress and brave in the face of danger. He was a soldier — and he died a soldier's death.

—S.M.

lem advisable.

Still resisting pressure for early action, MacKenzie gathered what intelligence he could, interviewing escapees from the bandits' camp. One, a schoolteacher whose tongue was sliced almost in half by the bandits to keep him from speaking, gave a fairly complete description of the layout and access to the camp. Another, allegedly a turned bandit, confirmed the schoolteacher's slow and painful words.

Organized reconnaissance was impossible. MacKenzie was without time, and his men were unable to go out on their own as small recon teams. After three days in Camp Charlie, MacKenzie realized just how low the level of the troops' training was: They could not walk quietly through the bush, set up or maintain observation posts, lie in ambush, or even maintain small group discipline. Most fired



When SOF sent trainers to Bosnia, MacKenzie was part of the team. Pictured here are (top, left to right) Col. Mike Peck, Col. Alex McColl, Maj. John Donovan, Peter Kokalis, and (front) Lt. Col. Robert Brown, then-Maj. Robert MacKenzie. The short-term training team rotated, but there remained a job to do and MacKenzie returned (inset) to continue training troops of the Tomislav Brigade, as adviser and second-in-command to Brig. Gen. Zeljko Glasnovic. Photo: SOF files; Inset: courtesy Sibyl MacKenzie



their weapons on automatic from the hip, with no attempt to aim. None had heard of “zeroing” rifles, and many even cut the butts off their AKs to make them look “cool.” No one could read a map, and they wore compasses as necklaces on decorative strings. They smoked pot on operations, a habit condoned by the hierarchy since pot was issued along with the rations — when there were rations.

Many men wore civvies under their uniforms: At the first incoming, they would shuck their uniforms, chuck their weapons and sneak back into camp as civilians. Six months for training would have been nice, but MacKenzie didn't have it. Against his better judgment, he agreed to formulate a plan. It came down to a flip of the coin: On one side, he knew his troops were inadequate; on the other, MacKenzie had received a direct order to attack, from the ranking army officer in the country, and he knew that a successful attack would buy him the time to train the SLCU. He had spent 10 years in the Rhodesian SAS whose motto was “Who Dares Wins,” and he decided to go for it.

Simplicity was paramount. With no leaders, MacKenzie couldn't divide his men into smaller units. So he formed them into “A” and “B” groups. A Group, with MacKenzie, Myers and Tarawali, would assault the hill from the left flank. B Group, with an indigent commander and Lt. James Maynard as observer, would move north on the right, securing the second, smaller hill southeast of the bandit stronghold and set up stop groups for fleeing bandits. Six Gurkhas would travel with A Group as command unit reinforcements and medics, but would not participate in offensive action. The attack was to commence with an air strike. Two borrowed Ni-



Sibyl and Bob MacKenzie with anticommunist UNITA forces of Dr. Jonas Savimbi, Jamba, Angola. MacKenzie spent some 15 years in Africa — almost all of it fighting terrorism or tyranny. Photo: John C. Coleman

HONOR, LOYALTY, DUTY, RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CAUSE

Military life — and combat — bring out the best and worst in men. In 20-plus years in it I met the brave and the cowardly, the professional and the wannabe, the selfless and self-serving. Rare was the individual, especially in the private sector, so dedicated to the profession of arms that all else fell second to the tenets of honor, loyalty, duty, and righteousness of cause.

That may sound archaically simple in this cluttered world, and perhaps belongs to a time when chivalry was an ironclad code. Yet Bob MacKenzie lived it every day — a 12th century knight caught in a time warp.

Bob and I came to know each other well in 1985. We'd bumped into each other occasionally in Rhodesia, but never had more than a nodding acquaintance. Bob's work with C Squadron, Special Air Service, and mine with the Rhodesian Light Infantry had the same goals but were in different orbits.

We talked for hours about honor and duty, what soldiering meant to us, what we'd learned in Vietnam and why we had served in Africa. We thought in parallel about many things: “The good and just fight” between good and bad summed up our world views and cemented our friendship. From that point, Bob became my yardstick for measuring every operator in the private sector I had occasion to meet. Few — very few — measured favorably.

Bob came to *SOF* just after I joined the staff in 1985. He was no pretentious chest-thumper, but a professional soldier in the finest sense who actually went and did, and who could write about it. MacKenzie's 40 or so articles lent credibility and respectability to *SOF*, and perhaps to the notion of private soldiering having a legitimate niche.

There were few troubled regions Bob missed during those nine years, as a trainer or combat journalist. Always, Bob maintained that dedicated point of view, a dragon slayer's point of view, of good causes worth fighting, then everything else. It surprised me at times, considering the nasty little wars and conflicts he covered, that he kept such a pure attitude. Perhaps he had philosophically risen above it, while his experience and savvy kept his military feet firmly planted. Bob wasn't naive, far from it, but he really wanted to believe in the honor and dignity of professional soldiering as he perceived it once to be — a Knight Templar on his quest.

Bob always seemed to end up back in Africa. He'll stay in Africa now, and I believe that Bob would not be unhappy to have died there rather than some other, more civilized, place.

It's tough to describe someone who, as an infantryman in Vietnam, was so

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fight, the MTA let the Burmese trail them into a valley and shut the back door, killing more than 100. The MTA managed to circle around and blow the main bridge on the Burmese supply route. For good measure, they then destroyed the airstrip at Tachilek. The Burmese, feeling they had shown their resolve, withdrew.

In past years RRI teams provided direct assistance to the Karen as surgeons and teachers, and have personally saved dozens of lives. Their training and guidance have certainly improved the quality of life for thousands more. These unpaid volunteers have as their mission to personally take aid to the victims of armed conflict, eliminating the middle man.

This year the situation on the ground prevented us from providing as much direct support as we have in the past. We were, however, able to identify an area that urgently needed assistance, and provide help to the friends of democracy at a time when they desperately needed it. We plan to continue.

RRI continues to receive requests for assistance not only from the Karen, but from throughout the world. The charity is composed entirely of volunteers and needs your donations of cash or non-controlled, non-perishable medical equipment and supplies. A receipt can be sent for cash donations and for estimated fair-market value of equipment received. Items such as military surplus battle-dressings, bandaging or splinting material, aid bags, blankets and instruments are urgently requested (RRI, SOF Warehouse, 5735 Arapahoe, Boulder, CO 80303). ✕

DEATH OF A WARRIOR

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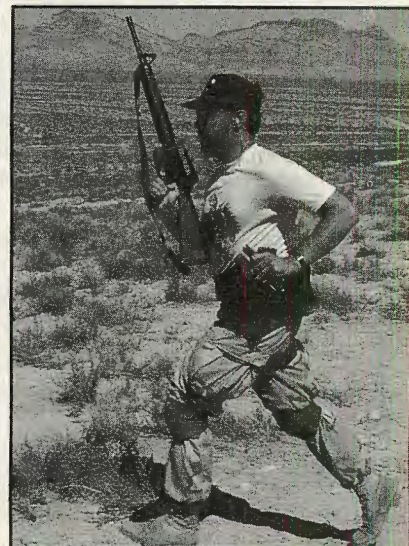
gerian jets were to drop cluster bombs on the bandit hill, inflicting damage and scattering the bandits into the stop groups. Since the bush was incredibly thick, the stop groups would set up on available trails.

By 0900 on 23 February, the men were ready to go. A tardy breakfast was consumed and ammunition was checked and issued as necessary. MacKenzie mustered his men and tried to instill a sense of cohesion, of

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purpose, of valor. He reminded them the bandits burned villages and tortured civilians, preyed upon the poorest and most defenseless, and would bring years of chaos and suffering to Sierra Leone if not stopped. Then the men boarded two trucks and two Land-Rovers, and drove to the next day's attack position. If all went well, they would be in the field three days.

The Wheels Fall Off

When the wheels fall off, they fall off fastest in Africa. At 1500 on the 23rd an Mi-24 helicopter, flown by a Russian pilot tasked with bringing the Nigerian commander to communicate with the Nigerian bombers, hovered over the central field at Camp Charlie. The pilot lowered his chopper to within feet of the ground, then suddenly changed his mind and went back up, circled the camp once and flew back to Freetown. To the dismay of all, he made no attempt to land — near the camp, on the road, or even near the town of Mile 91. He just left, with no further communication. Attempts to radio HQ for an explanation failed. At 0800 on the morning of the 24th the Nigerian jets bombed the wrong hill. Alerted by bombs dropping uselessly into the unoccupied bush, the bandits were ready for A Group as it approached their stronghold.

Tarawali, MacKenzie and Myers were leading when they walked into the ambush. MacKenzie always led from the front. On the back of his Kevlar helmet was sewn a "Follow Me" patch that had served him in so many wars — Vietnam, Rhodesia, El Salvador, Bosnia. He wasn't wearing his helmet on the 24th, though; he wore the dark green beret of the SLCU. But he was leading his men as he always did — by example, from the front.

Tarawali was killed in the first volley, and four other SLCU troops wounded. An attempt was made to carry Tarawali's body and the four wounded out, but at that point heavy fire came down on the group. No one could see their assailants, who were completely concealed by the dense bush, but the bullets flew thick and deadly. A Gurkha in the group somewhat behind was wounded, and the other Gurkhas

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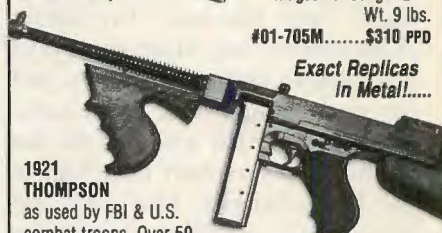


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turned their attention to treating him and carrying him back. At that point MacKenzie, who was still up front returning fire, ordered everyone to retreat. Another volley of lead rained down and broke the spirit of the SLCU group. They dropped Tarawali and the four wounded men and fled in a panic, actually trampling the Gurkhas in their haste. MacKenzie yelled again that everyone should retreat and the Gurkhas picked themselves up and regrouped around their wounded man, preparing to carry him out. The senior Gurkha medic saw MacKenzie take two rounds through his legs and one through his back. MacKenzie dropped his rifle and fell to the ground as Myers bent over him to give him assistance. That is the last anyone saw of either. Intercepts from bandit radio revealed that they had taken MacKenzie and Tarawali's bodies, but there were no reports about Myers.

At this writing the Gurkhas remain in Camp Charlie, led by their own stalwart officers, with Lt. Maynard as their GSG contact while replacements are found for Mac-

Kenzie and Myers. Maynard and B Group saw no action on the 24th. They marched up, secured their hill and put out stop groups until they were radioed to return. Maynard returned to Camp Charlie to find the entire command structure either missing or inoperative through confusion and lack of initiative. He did an excellent job of taking charge, sending patrols to look for the missing men, organizing a helicopter search, trying to gather information on casualties. After two weeks with no information, Myers was presumed dead. Despite the tragedy, no one wants to quit. The cause is good and the fight far from hopeless. Given time, the Gurkhas could surely fashion a functioning unit useful to the Sierra Leone government in its struggle with the bandits. There are, however, many questions to be answered, and the situation remains fluid.

Some days before his death Col. Robert MacKenzie wrote the following quotation in his personal diary:

It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the

strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena ... who strives ... who spends himself and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

— Teddy Roosevelt

Of Col. Robert MacKenzie, Lt. Andy Myers and Maj. Abu Tarawali one can only say:

*Oh stay with company and mirth
And daylight and the air;
Too full already is the grave
Of fellows that were good
and brave
And died because they were.*

(A.E. Housman, "Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries" XXXVIII)

Often a contributor to the pages of SOF, Sibyl MacKenzie was with Col. Robert MacKenzie at Camp Charlie in Sierra Leone at the time of his last combat operation. ❧



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